District of Oregon CJA Tip Sheet
Expert Travel

Negotiating reduced hourly rates for CJA services increases the availability of resources for CJA clients. Most experts are willing to provide services and travel at rates lower than their customary private rates. Defense counsel may want to advise experts of expectations about how they will bill travel time. Experts and service providers should bill their travel time on vouchers as described below unless an alternative arrangement has been previously approved in eVoucher. If an expert indicates s/he would like to bill for travel time in a different manner, please seek authorization in eVoucher for both the services and the travel rates before engaging the services of the expert.

1. Travel Rate: 50% of the Expert's Privately-Retained Hourly Rate

At the time counsel contacts an expert/service provider about working on a case, counsel should request a reduced hourly rate for both CJA services and for travel time, with travel time to be billed at or below 50% of the expert's hourly rate for services.

2. Apply Rate for Services Whenever and Wherever the Expert is Doing Substantive Work

An expert/service provider should apply the full hourly rate for services whenever conducting substantive work on the case, regardless of location (e.g., in the office, at home, on a plane or train, work in the field, etc.).

3. Apply Reduced Hourly Travel Rate Only When the Expert is Traveling and Does Not Have the Opportunity to Do Substantive Work

An expert/service provider should apply the reduced travel rate when traveling to a team meeting, client meeting or interview, witness interviews, or court appearance, etc., and does not have the opportunity to work on the case on which s/he has been retained (e.g. driving to the airport, waiting in a TSA line, cab from airport to hotel, etc.). This includes expert travel to jails and BOP facilities.

For example, if an expert/service provider has two hours available to work during a flight, the expert should understand that it is our expectation that the expert will work on our case and bill at the services rate. If the expert/service provider is traveling, has an opportunity to do substantive work (reviewing materials, writing a report, etc.), and does work on the case, it is our expectation that the expert will not bill for this time.

4. Field Work: Apply Hourly Service Rate

An expert/service provider conducting interviews with different witnesses over the course of a day as part of investigation or field work may include local travel as a component of their substantive work. Apply the services rate. This commonly applies to investigators and mitigation specialists.

5. Mode of Travel

An expert/service provider service provider should avoid incurring unnecessary travel expenses. For example, travel between Portland and Seattle might be by train rather than personal vehicle; travel

between Portland and Medford should be by airline. Mileage may not be billed for rental cars, but gas expenses are reimbursable. Expert/service providers and counsel should carpool whenever possible.

Questions? Contact the CJA Panel Team!
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(503) 326-2123, ask for CJA Panel Office
or, eVoucher: navigate to Help, eVoucher Documentation